

Kansas Launches Cost-Share Initiative to Improve Existing Livestock Water Supplies

TOPEKA – The Kansas State Conservation Commission (SCC) last night approved a plan to work with Kansas livestock producers on a cost-share program targeted at improving existing livestock water supplies. The Kansas Department of Agriculture's (KDA) Division of Conservation urges livestock producers to focus project applications on restoration of existing ponds, well development, spring development or other water storage projects.

The SCC, which is a board of commissioners consisting of five elected and four appointed members, approved the use of \$500,000 of fiscal year 2012 cost-share funding that has been carried forward to provide immediate assistance to livestock producers in drought-stricken Kansas. Producers will have 45-days to sign-up for the cost-share assistance initiative and will be eligible to receive up to \$2,000 per project and up to \$4,000 per landowner. Projects will be considered and approved on a first-come, first-served basis. KDA's Division of Conservation will collect applications submitted by county conservation districts and then process and approve individual contracts.

"The impacts of this drought are being felt far and wide and will continue to be felt even after rain arrives. We are here to help producers cope with the drought today but also help them recover and plan for future droughts," said Kansas Secretary of Agriculture Dale Rodman. "From a newly adopted effort to restore existing ponds to drilling deeper wells, developing springs or digging new ponds, this funding will provide critical assistance to assure the hard-hit livestock producers in Kansas have water storage and supplies available for critical seasons going forward."

Pastures that currently have limited or no existing water supplies are the primary targets for this initiative. Livestock producers with existing ponds who are requesting cost-share assistance must meet specific criteria to be eligible. Specifically, dams must be in satisfactory condition or the landowner must commit to bring the dam to a satisfactory condition and the pond must still be capable of serving a conservation use for stock water. Cost-share funding can be used for sediment removal; principal spillway replacement; or embankment seeding. Rodman said the Division of Conservation and the county conservation districts will be flexible with livestock producers to help assure they meet the specific criteria.

Projects related to well development, spring development and new ponds will follow current policy requirements.

Rodman urged livestock producers to work with their county conservation district to learn more about these cost-share opportunities.